

NOVEMBER 1994

OPEN ARMS

VOL. 6

NO. 11

• • • • • MICHIANA'S LESBIAN NEWSLETTER • • • • •

WHO AND WHAT ARE THE LESBIAN AVENGERS?

The Lesbian Avengers uses grassroots activism to fight for lesbian survival and visibility. We identify lesbian issues and perspectives. We empower lesbians to become experienced organizers who can participate in political rebellion. Learning skills and strategizing together are at the core of our existence.

As a direct-action, activist group, The Lesbian Avengers is not for everybody, nor should it be. It is for women who want to be involved in activism, work in community, be creative, do shit-work, take responsibility on a regular basis, have their minds blown, change their opinions and share organizing skills.

Since we started in June, 1992, we have found that certain organizing ideas help us keep our work pro-active, gratifying and successful.

Interested? contact: The Lesbian Avengers, c/o The Center, 208 W 13th St., New York, NY 10011.--info Lavender Morning



NEW RIGHTS LAW IN FLORIDA

Congratulations to the folks in West Palm Beach, where the city council voted 4-1 for a gay rights law on the first reading. Second reading is scheduled for Sept 12. The mayor is the leading sponsor of the legislation.--info

Lavender Morning

WOMON REFUSES TO GIVE UP HER SEAT

ON BUS...You may have read of this incident in NY, where a Jewish Orthodox busline, financed in part by government money, harassed a woman to sit away from the men so as not to "defile" their holy space. A curtain is in place to keep the sexes separated, but because there were so many men on the bus, the men harassed the woman to all move together to the front of the bus so the men could also have part of the woman's side and move the curtain over on the woman's side and thereby increase the men's holy space. Only one of the woman refused to give up her seat to accommodate their demand. The police were called in and there was a large confrontation over the matter. She kept her seat! These boys have preserved their attitude, through hundreds of years, of keeping woman in low regard.

This event really p---ed me off. I thought maybe Lesbians should start their own church, with its tax exempt status. Of course, with this tax exempt status we would have to allow in any of the public. I wonder how long men would choose to be a part of our church if they were made to listen from behind a curtain. What do you think?

My hero of the week is Kaye, who refused to give up her seat on a bus to a man who tried bullying her to do so.

Do you have similar experiences? Feel free to write Open Arms and share.

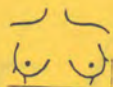
GB



COMMUNITY EVENTS

VIDEO NIGHT

Forbidden Love
and
Housekeeping



Wimin's stories about coming out and an eccentric housekeeper.

Gloria and Julie's
Call for directions: (616)-684-4011

Friday, Nov. 11th
7:00 p.m.

LESBIAN SUPPORT GROUP

Every Tuesday
7-9 p.m.

For info, write:
LSG
P.O.
Box 1281
Niles, MI 49120



EVENTS COORDINATORS

Third Friday Out: Jackie (219)-291-5837
Video Night: Gloria & Julie (616)-684-4011
Game Night:
Sunday Brunch: Kaye & Marcia (219)-271-0338

OPEN ARMS STAFF

Mary (219)-234-5986
Sheree (616)-684-6365
Kaye & Marcia (219)-271-0338
Advertising: Kaye & Marcia
Subscriptions: Kaye & Marcia

EDITORIAL POLICY

We may edit any article submitted for length or content. We ask that all articles submitted be signed and typed, but will respect the wishes of the author by not printing her name if so requested.

MISSION STATEMENT

Open Arms exists to disseminate diverse information of interest to the Michiana lesbian community.

3RD FRIDAY OUT

Four Happiness
4609 Grape Rd, Mishawaka



Friday, Nov. 19th
7:00 p.m.

For reservations, call Jackie by Wednesday, Nov. 16th,
at (219)-291-5837

OPEN ARMS DEADLINE/MEETING

The deadline for submissions for the December *Open Arms* is November 10th. Submissions can be mailed to Open Arms, P. O. Box 845, Mishawaka, IN 46546 or given to Mary, Sheree or Kaye. Submissions received after November 10th may not be published in the December newsletter.

Newsletter meeting: Sunday, November, 13th, 1994 at Kaye & Marcia's, 6:30 p.m.. Call 271-0338 for directions.

PLEASE TYPE SUBMISSIONS IF POSSIBLE

If it is possible for you to type your submissions on a letter quality typewriter or printer, please do so using a 55 space line. This will make layout much easier. Thanks.

THANKS

Lavender Rhythm Dance Committee wishes to thank all the womym who attended the Oct. 15th dance. With over 90 womym in attendance, this has been our largest turnout to date. We also received positive and helpful feedback in the way of music and offers to help with the next dance. Womym of the community: more help is always needed. We have scheduled a dance meeting for Nov. 20, 1994, at 11:00 a.m. at four Seasons restaurant in South Bend. For more information, please call: Laura at (616)-684-7362 or Cheryl at (219)-287-9340. Once again a very loving Thank You from all of us at lavender Rhythm Dance Committee.

Question: What does feminism mean to you?

"Feminism is the celebration of the feminine without the criticism of the masculine."

K.V., North Muskegon

"Feminism; striving to help people in general and women specifically to reach their highest potential and to appreciate diversity."

D.M., Grand Rapids

"The highest regard for and first loyalty to women."

L.A., North Muskegon

NEWS NOTES

---MEDAL OF FREEDOM...President Clinton awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Barbara Jordan, Head of the National Commission on Immigration Reform, and Dorothy Height, President of the National Council of Negro Wimin. (info from Mi. Wimin's Times)

---THE VIOLENCE POLICY CENTER...reports that 1,908 wimin were killed by guns in the U.S. in 1992, but just 26 wimin used handguns to kill in self-defense. (info from Mi. Wimin's Times)

---THIS "AUTO" CHANGE ...a recently completed market opinion research in Southfield, Mich. has found that only 7% of an auto dealership's sales staff are wimin. The average auto. salesperson is a white 40-year old married man. (Hey, we are buying about 1/2 the wheels. Maybe we need to ask for wimin salespersons to deal with.)

---SEX DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORK PLACE...resources FOR IDENTIFYING AND RECOVERING...Send Us Your Questions to:
Michigan Women's Times

P.O.Box 3595
Kalamazoo, MI. 49003-3595
or call 616/649/4949

---THE DEFENSE DEPT. and the Justice Dept. let an appeals deadline pass on Fri., Oct. 14th, in Keith Meinhold's case. Meinhold's lawyer says the government's inaction means that the ban on homosexuals in the military is headed for extinction. (info from Detroit Free Press)

---LAVENDAR LIFE MAGAZINE...is having a writing contest. Every woman is invited to enter and prizes will be awarded. All short stories and poetry received between Sept. 1, '94 and Dec. 31, '94 will automatically be entered into the contest. Winners will be announced in their Jan. 15th., '95 Anniversary Issue. All entrants who are published will receive a complimentary issue, mailed with their privacy in mind. All writers will retain final rights to their short stories and/or poetry. A sample of the prizes that will be awarded are as follows: Short Stories First prize is \$100, Second prize is \$50, Third prize is \$25.....Poetry First prize is \$50, Poetry Second prize is \$25. Other prizes will be awarded, as well a subscriptions to Lavendar Life. For more information or to send your entry write to :
Lavendar Life, P.O.Box 898, Binghamton, NY 13902-0898. Attention: Pamela K. Fite.

---ANITA RODDICK...founder of The Body Shop was awarded an outstanding business leaders award by the Michigan Business School. She is the first woman to receive the award in its nearly 40 year history. Roddick lectured at the U of Michigan on Corporate Environmental Management. (info from S.Bend Trib.)



MABLE, MABLE, SET THE HOLIDAY TABLE

SWEET POTATO & FRUIT PUREE

6 sweet potatoes (8 cups)
1 baking apple, peeled, cored, and cubed (1 cup)
2 ripe bananas, peeled, and cut up
1/4 cup unsalted butter, cut up
1/4 cup brown sugar
2 tablespoons rum or apple juice

1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ginger
Salt and pepper to taste
Sliced toasted almonds for garnish



I. In a very large sauce pan, combine sweet potatoes, apple and enough water to cover. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat. Cover and simmer until very tender, about 20 min. Drain
II. In food processor, puree sweet potatoes mixture, bananas, butter, brown sugar, rum, spices, salt and pepper to taste.
III. Pour into serving bowls. Garnish with Almond.
(6-8 servings)

SHE WHO LAUGHS LAST...

She TV arrived on ABC last month with a high-concept selling point: TV's first sketch-comedy show focusing on, and creatively dominated by, women. Actually, from a commercial standpoint the female angle has probably hurt more than it has helped. Critics were generally cool to a show that wore its feminist agenda on its sleeve, and a lot of potential male viewers were probably scared off as well. Ratings have been mediocre, and prospects for the show (halfway through a six-week summer run) are dicey. Which is sad, because *She TV* is not just a gender-bending gimmick; it really is a breakthrough.

Women have long been second-class citizens in TV sketch comedy, never more so than today. On *Saturday Night Live*, the female cast members are so overshadowed that most of the women's roles seem to be played by men in drag. The only memorable character created by a woman in the past five years is Julia Sweeney's "Pat"--and the joke is that no one knows Pat's sex. the show has all but abandoned nuanced relationship comedy in favor of TV parodies and broad, running characters that are like antic vaudeville acts. Chevy Chase and Gilda Radner used to be play sketches in bed together. Now we have "Operaman."

She TV does media parodies too, and good ones. Nick Bakay has nailed the sensitive-macho posturing of *NYPD Blue*'s David Caruso, and the show has lampooned everything from *Forrest Gump* to a dippy model turned TV host named Bagitta.

Produced by former SNL writers Bonnie and Terry Turner, *She TV* ventures into corporate boardrooms, suburban kaffeeklatches and neighborhood bars with the savvy eye of comics who actually have lives outside the TV studio.

The sketches are plentiful and blessedly short, making their satiric point and dashing on. the eight castmembers (five women, three men) are uniformly good. *She TV* is smarter, fresher and more perceptive than any other TV comedy in years. Why hasn't anyone noticed?--info Lavender Morning



EMPIRE SYNDICATE CHARTS SECOND BANNER MONTH

Tampa, Fla--Empire Syndicate, the nation's first and only major lesbian and gay writers group serving both gay and general interest media, has completed its second month of operations and is already serving publications in 15 states.

The syndicate kicked off in early June with a group of nine writers and has since grown to 12. Empire Managing Editor Todd Simmons attributes the syndicate's quick growth to the breadth and quality of its writers.

"We long suspected that there is a market for lesbian and gay commentary. The scores of inquiries we've had about Empire confirm that," Simmons said. "we expect the syndicate's success to continue as Empire continues to grow."--info Lavender Morning

Indiana to Introduce Gay Civil Rights Bill in 1995

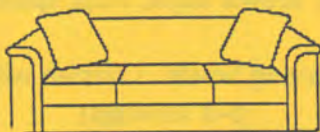


Justice and other groups from across the state have held two meetings to coordinate plans to introduce an amendment to the Indiana Civil Rights Code to add Sexual Orientation to the language of this bill.

Details about the strategy that our community will be employing will be discussed at the political conference on Sunday, November 20. Please call your county voter's registration office to find out who represents you, ask them to support such a bill, and ask them for their stance. Send a copy of your letter and a copy of any response to the Justice Committee, PO Box 2387, Indianapolis, IN 46206--info Justice, Inc

'Incidentally homosexual?'

Washington--A survey by the Harvard School of Public Health and the Center for Policy studies shows that sexual orientation may be more complicated than merely a question of gay or straight. Nearly one in five Americans has been attracted to some of the same sex since early adolescence. the study found that between 3.3 percent and 17.8 percent of American women, and 6.2 percent and 20.8 percent of American men, could be considered what the survey classified as "incidentally homosexual."--info Michigan Women's Times





THE FAIR PAY ACT: A LESSON IN FAIR PLAY

Wage discrimination has enjoyed a long history in our society. Discrimination has been perpetuated in the past through the denial of jobs considered "off limits" to women, thereby channeling women into more traditional female jobs. This job segregation by sex has previously been unreachable by any pay equity acts until the recent enactment of the Fair Pay Act.

The Fair Pay Act, technically an amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), prohibits sex, race and national origin wage discrimination among employees for work in "equivalent jobs." Equivalent jobs are defined as those whose composite skills, efforts, working conditions and responsibilities are equivalent in value, even if the jobs are dissimilar.

How prevalent is this discrimination? In 1992, women made only 71 cents for every dollar that men earned. Research has stated that 1/3 to 1/2 of this gap can't be attributed to legitimate factors such as education or experience. It's estimated that discrimination accounts for a wage loss of \$130 billion annually. Although the gap has grown smaller, the decline is thought to be due to a drop in men's wages - not a rise in women's wages.

An individual who believes they are being discriminated against according to provisions of the Fair Pay Act may either file a complaint in court or file a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the federal agency charged with enforcement of the Act. The Fair Pay Act becomes effective in Jul 1995.--info Michigan Women's Times

Domestic partners bill vetoed

Sacramento, Calif.--Gov Pete Wilson vetoed a measure that would have given unmarried partners some of the same rights as married couples. The 'domestic partners' bill would have been the first such state law in the country. Supporters said it would help elderly couples who don't marry for fear of lowering Social Security or pension benefits. Opponents claimed it would advance homosexual lifestyles.--info Michigan Women's Times



TEXAS PAPER RUNS GAY WEDDINGS

The *El Paso Times*, a daily newspaper serving West Texas and Southern New Mexico, began printing same-gender wedding announcements alongside non-gay ones on 6/26/94! Applaud their efforts to set an example of nondiscrimination and accuracy in the media.--info Lavender Morning

THE COURT OF FRIENDS (A Singles Service)

O.K. all you singles! Here's your opportunity to reach out to other singles. Write out what you want other singles to know about you, what you are looking for in another (be brief), and send to:

The Court of Friends
P.O.Box 1281
Niles, MI 49120

(Be sure to include your address.)

Your identity will be kept confidential...you will be assigned an ID number. Your info and ID number will be published in OPEN ARMS. (It would be helpful if you would send your info early in the month so that it can be published in the next month's issue of OPEN ARMS.) Also, O.A. reserves the right to edit, if necessary, for publication.



Those wishing to respond to an ID Single may do so by writing whatever you wish, putting it in a stamped, sealed envelope with the intended ID number on the front (in pencil). Place your message in another stamped envelope and mail to the above P.O.Box. Upon receiving your message, the ID number will be replaced with the corresponding name and address and mailed. Then you're on your own. COME ON SINGLES! Someone special wants to know you're out there!!!

Sharing Our Faith Journey

INDIVIDUALS • COUPLES • FAMILIES • GROUPS

An exchange of ideas and experiences of Christian Congregations moving towards reconciliation of the word of God and the diversity of sexual expression in God's world. Join three congregations who have moved through the process of becoming open and accepting of Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals in their Faith community.

When: Nov. 6, 4-6 p.m.

Where: Southside Christian
(Church Disciples of Christ)
1329 E. Jackson Rd
(219)-291-1156

All Welcome.

Co-sponsored by the Lesbian Committee for the St. Joseph Valley Chapter of the National Organization for Women and Parents, Friends and Families of Lesbians and Gays.

Childcare Provided.

For more information please call (219)-282-2407

YOUR REACTION PLEASE

Last week I told my mother everything; how I've always known I was different, but didn't really understand it myself. Now, I fully accept who I am and feel good about being the person I am. I wanted to tell her about how I was feeling all my life, but never felt safe or strong enough until now.

My mother assured me that she still loves me, after all I am her daughter. She said she doesn't judge anyone. She also said she was a christian and couldn't accept or condone the way I am.

My feelings are all confused. I'm so happy that my mother loves me, but somehow I still feel really bad.

Can anyone help me to better understand why I feel so undone.

Please react to the following : Agnus
P.O.Box 1281
Niles, MI 49120

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guidelines to Tirzah Gerstein, 85 Newbury St,
Hartford, CT 06114. Lesbians over 60.



DRIFT-WOODS COTTAGES

Two-bedroom and one-bedroom cottages available on Lake Michigan, ten minutes south of Saugatuck, Michigan. The cottages are open year around, are fully furnished, have well-equipped kitchens, and linens and towels are provided for bedroom and bath. The living rooms have gas log fireplaces. Gas grills are provided for outdoor barbeques. The beach is accessible via stairs. Hiking trails, sand dunes, cross-country skiing, shops galleries, restaurants, antique shopping nearby.

Call Susan for weekend, mid-week, weekly visits at (616) 857-2586.

*New! Opening in June...a new women's guesthouse!
Call about special pre-opening rates in May.
Book now for Holland Michigan Tulip Festival, May 4th-14th.*

Saugatuck on the river...

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...an enchanting retreat

Deerpath Lodge sits atop a dune overlooking the Kalamazoo River. Surrounding evergreens, oaks, and an extensive wildflower garden provide a rustic charm. The river and 45 acres seclude our private retreat from public access. Saugatuck, the infamous art colony, and mecca of innovative shops and restaurants is just five minutes by car, longer by boat. We offer three spacious guest rooms, each with private bath; one with kitchenette. A wholesome breakfast is provided.

Guest Rooms For Women



For Reservations & Information:

P O Box 849 Saugatuck, Michigan 49453

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N O V E M B E R

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
AA Elkhart 7 p.m. every Sunday		1	2 NOW Mtg St. Joe Libr. 7:00 p.m.	3	4	5
6	7	8 Support Group 7:00 p.m.	9	10	11 Video Night Niles 7:00 p.m.	12
13 Open Arms Mtg 6:30 p.m.	14	15	16 Reservations due for 3rd Friday Out	17	18 Third Friday Out 7:00 p.m.	19 Wilma MANKILLER'S BIRTHDAY
20	21	22 Billie Jean King's Birth- day	23	24	25	26
27 PFLAG Mtg. 2-4 p.m.	28	29 ↓	30 Shirley Chisolm's BIRTHDAY			

OTHER COMING EVENTS

NOV. 6 - **SHARING OUR FAITH JOURNEY.** 4-6 p.m. Southside Christian Church, 1329 E. Jackson Rd., South Bend. Discussion with 3 churches who have become open to Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals. Co-sponsored by the Lesbian Committee of NOW and P-Flag. For more info call (219) 282-2407.

NOV. 11 - **CHRIS WILLIAMSON and TRET FURE.** 8 p.m. Kalamazoo Valley Community College Auditorium, 6767 W. "O" Ave. Kalamazoo. Our Times Productions. Call (616) 649-2789. \$18 and \$15 in advance.

NOV. 11/12 **Circe Productions 9th Annual WOMEN IN THE ARTS FESTIVAL.** Edgewood United Church, 469 N. Hagadorn, East Lansing (corner N. Hagadorn & Beech, between E. Grand River & Burcham) Weekend pass - \$20 - \$25 for evening concerts (Pam Hall and disappear fear) and daytime activities. 25 craftswomen, workshops, food, Reader's Theater. For info call Marie (517) 646-9865. Concert only info:

NOV. 11 - **PAM HALL.** 8 p.m. Tickets \$10, \$11, \$12 sliding scale;

NOV. 12 - **disappear fear.** 8 p.m. Tickets \$12, \$13, \$14 sliding scale.

NOV. 19,20 **JUSTICE, INC. Statewide Awards Banquet and Civil Rights Conference.** Indianapolis Marriott, 7202 E. 21st St. Banquet 7 p.m. PERI JUDE RADECIC, Executive Director of National Gay & Lesbian Task Force will speak. Focus will be on the effort to pass an Indiana Gay & Lesbian Civil Rights Bill in 1995. For more info call Wally at (812) 474-4845. Banquet \$12 for Justice members, \$14 for non-members.

DEC. 3 - **6th Annual Ft. Wayne GAY/LESBIAN DINNER DANCE** Grand Wayne Center. Tickets \$25. Reservation deadline 11/28. No tickets sold at door. For info call (219) 744-1144.

DEC. 3 - **SUZANNE WESTENHOEFER** - Lesbian Comedienne 7:30 & 10:30 p.m. The Madame Walker Theatre Indianapolis. Call Branching Out Productions (317) 637-2906 or 574-0615 for tickets, \$18 in advance.

DEC. 8 - **SUZANNE WESTENHOEFER** - in Chicago. 7:30 10:00 p.m. Park West, 322 Armitage, Chicago Produced by Branching Out Productions, (312) 559-1212 for tickets, \$18 in advance.

Same Time Every Month

1st Wednesday - **NOW Meeting, 7:00 p.m.,** Main

Library, Corner of Main and Wayne, South Bend. Call 288-7123 for info.

4th Sunday - **P-FLAG Meeting 2-4 p.m.,** Christ the King Lutheran Church, 1719 Cleveland Rd., South Bend. Call Nancy at 277-2684 for more info.